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Media Relations

September 25, 2013

UNH Health Services Receives National Accreditation

DURHAM, N.H. – The University of New Hampshire Health Services has been awarded national accreditation for the fifth consecutive time by the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC). Status as an accredited organization means UNH Health Services has met nationally recognized standards for the provision of accreditation providing the highest quality of care to its patients/clients as determined by an independent, external process of evaluation. Not all ambulatory health care organizations seek accreditation; not all that undergo the rigorous on-site survey process are granted accreditation. The accreditation runs for three years.

“The process of meeting the accreditation standards is a team effort that helps make all of us at Health Services accountable to our students, staff, and faculty,” said Kevin Charles, assistant vice president for student and academic services and executive director of Health Services. “Accreditation provides an important set of objective standards for a health program to meet that are reviewed by a neutral party to assure that quality health care exists. We have now done this five consecutive times over the past 12 years and I could not be more pleased and proud of the Health Services staff.”

Ambulatory health care organizations seeking accreditation by AAAHC undergo an extensive self-assessment and on-site survey by AAAHC expert surveyors – physicians, nurses, and administrators who are actively involved in ambulatory health care. The survey is consultative and educational, presenting best practices to help an organization improve its care and services.

AAAHC accreditation is specifically for organizations providing medical or diagnostic services in settings where overnight stays are not required, including college health centers, group medical and dental practices, and community health centers. “I have been doing site visits for over 25 years and UNH Health Services is truly one of the best organizations I have surveyed,” said Dr. Thomas E. Lipps, occupational medical director at the Bronson Battle Creek Health System in Battle Creek, Michigan. “How lucky the university community is to have these services available to them.” Lipps visited UNH for AAAHC in February to assess Health Services' programs and services.

UNH Health Services, which averages more than 20,000 visits a year from students, staff and faculty, is a health and wellness center. In support of the university's academic mission, it is committed to promoting, maintaining and improving the health and well-being of the university community. Health Services also has primary responsibility for addressing public health issues impacting the UNH community. The staff includes physicians, a physician assistant, nurse practitioners, nurses, laboratory and radiologic technologists, wellness educators/counselors, nutritionists, pharmacists, licensed massage therapists, and administrative staff. Services for students include primary medical care, women's health, laboratory, radiology and pharmacy, and health and wellness services on a wide variety of health topics including nutrition, alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, sexuality, chronic and acute illnesses, emotional and spiritual health, stress management and wellness.

Health Services opened an employee clinic in 2012. Services include clinical appointments for infections, injuries, acute health problems, workplace injuries, pre-employment physicals and worker's compensation visits, allergy services, and immunizations (travel and others), laboratory, radiology and pharmacy. In addition, massage therapy, biofeedback, and light therapy are available.

“As a residential campus, UNH is like a small town and the success and well-being of our students, faculty and staff are integrally related,” said Mark Rubinstein, UNH vice president for student and academic services. “I

appreciate the work that our team in Health Services does on behalf of our students and this community. The reaffirmation of national accreditation offers a visible and objective confirmation of the quality of their efforts.”

For more information, contact Kathleen Grace-Bishop, director of education and promotion, Health Services, at (603) 862-3823.

For more information on AAAHC, go to www.aaahc.org.

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